

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed 03/22/04 in which claims 17-26 were rejected. With this Amendment, the specification is amended, such that pending claims are 17-26.

Specification

The title of the invention was objected to as not descriptive, and a new title was required that clearly indicated the invention to which the claims are directed. As suggested by the Examiner, with this amendment, the title of the application is amended to "Method of Assembling a Wrist Rest." As such, the objection to the specification is overcome.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 17-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rice. However, Rice does not render the present invention obvious. The present invention comprises a method of assembling a wrist rest assembly having a pad assembly and a base. The pad assembly comprises an upper portion with a gel layer, and a lower portion. Assembling the wrist rest comprises aligning the upper portion with the lower portion to form the pad assembly. In doing so, the upper portion is aligned with the lower portion so that edge sections (30) on the lower portion extend laterally beyond the longitudinally extending side edges of the gel layer. (Figure 6.)

In addition, the wrist rest assembly comprises a base having a flat support surface and longitudinally extending edge supports projecting upwardly. Assembling the wrist rest further comprises aligning the pad assembly with the base so that the edge supports on the support surface of the base project along and above the entire extent of each edge section of the lower portion of the pad assembly.

Rice does not render the claimed invention obvious because Rice does not disclose aligning an upper portion of the pad assembly with the lower portion of the pad assembly so that edge sections (30) on the lower portion extend laterally beyond the longitudinally extending side

edges of the gel layer. First, Rice does not disclose an upper portion of a pad assembly having a gel layer. Second, Rice does not disclose a lower portion of the pad assembly that is aligned with the upper portion as claimed.

As illustrated in Figure 5A, Rice discloses a palm rest having a top hand support section 82, a height adjustment section or spacer 84, and a bottom section 86. Though identified as the upper portion of the pad assembly, the hand support section 82 does not comprise a gel layer having a gel length as claimed. Similarly, though identified as the lower portion of the pad assembly, the spacer 84 does not align with the hand support section 82 as required by the claims. In particular, the spacer 84 does not have edge sections which extend laterally beyond the longitudinally extending side edges of the gel layer. Instead, the spacer 84 matches the edges of the hand support section 82.

Indeed, the spacer 84 must match the edges of the hand support section 82, and cannot extend laterally beyond it, for the palm rest to function. The palm rest is formed to have a cavity of sufficient height to allow a pointing device, such as a mouse, to slide underneath the palm rest. (Col. 6, ll. 26-30.) As such, the spacer 84 does not extend laterally beyond the edges of the hand support section 82.

Nor does Rice teach or disclose aligning the pad assembly with the base so that the edge supports on the base project along and above the entire extent of each edge section of the lower portion of the pad assembly. In direct contrast, Rice teaches a bottom section 86 which connects with a spacer 84 using an interlocking ridge and groove system. (Col. 7, ll. 31-38.) The base 86 does not have edge supports that project along and above the entire extent of each edge section of the spacer 84, but rather comprises a ridge 92b that interlocks with a groove 90b on a bottom portion of the spacer 84. In fact, as identified by the Examiner, the edge sections on the spacer 84 include the ridges 92a which interlock with the hand support section 82. The base 86 clearly does not have any portion which projects along and above the ridges 92a of the spacer 84. As a result, Rice does not teach or disclose aligning the pad assembly with the base

so that the edge supports on the base project along and above the lower portion of the pad assembly as claimed.

Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rice and further in view of Andre et al. Claim 23 is a dependent claim. Based on the arguments presented above, independent claim 17 is not rendered obvious by Rice. If an independent claim is non-obvious, then any claim depending therefrom is non-obvious. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071 (Fed. Cir. 1988). As such claim 23 is not obvious.

With the above amendments and discussion, the application is now in condition for allowance. Notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0982. A duplicate copy of this communication is enclosed

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 21, 2004

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